His Excellency Ing. Ernesto Leal Sanchez, Foreign Minister of Nicaraguo paid an official visit to India from April 18—22, 1995. During the visit, Nicaragua was offered a "technical assistance/ training of experts" under the ITEC Programme and a pilot project under the ITEC terms.

His Excellency Dr. Rodrigo Pardo Garcia-Pena visited India from April 20—23, 1995. Columbia was offered "technical assistance/training of experts" under the ITEC Programme.

Agriculture Minister of Jordan paid a visit to India from March 7—16, 1995. The Minister showed interest in the exchange of informtaion regarding seeds development and Indian agricultural equipments. No agreement on joint venture was signed during the visit.

His Excellency Dr. Ali Akbar Vilayati, Foreign Minister of Iran visited India from January 2—4, 1995 for the 8th Sesion of the India-Iran Joint Commission. Among the other issues of bilateral interest, the meeting also discussed identifying technical cooperation programmes between the two countries in different fields.

His Excellency Mr. Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, President of Iran visited India from April 17—19, 1995. During the visit, Memorandum of Understandings were signed on the following:

(i) Cooperation on Tourism

(ii) Cooperation in the Telecommunications and postal services.

(iii) Cooperation on Environment.

(iv) Cooperation on prevention of drug trafficking.

Mr. Federico E. Mayor, Director General of UNESCO visited India from April 30 to May 3, 1995 in connection with the Regioal Meeting on Tolerance for Asia and pacific organised by Government of India.

Mr. Ayala Lasso, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights visited India from April 30 to May 6, 1995 at the invitation of Government of India.

Us Defence Secretary, Commerce Secretary and Treasury Secretary have visited India since January, 1995.

Talks held during these visits were aimed at the overall strengthening and diversification of bilateral relations. They included talks on Indo-US defence cooperation, the strengthening of trade, commercial and economic relations as well as consultations on international and regional issues of mutual interest.

An Agreed Minute on Defence Relation was signed on January 12, 1995 during the visit of the US Defence Secretary. A Memorandum of Understanding for the formation of an Indo-US Commercial Alliance was signed on January 16, 1995 during the visit of US Commerce Secretary.

The Agreed Minute on Defence Relations provides a framework for Indo-US defence cooperation envisaging concurrent progress in the three areas of civilian to civilian cooperation, service to service cooperation and cooperation in defence research and production. The Commercial Alliance provides an institutionalised mechanism for private industry in the USA to work with their Indian counterparts to increase trade and investment between the two countries.

The President of Sri Lanka Mrs. Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga visited India from March 25—28, 1995. India offered assistance to Sri Lanka in infrastructure and transportation sectors, as also the dairy sector and in the setting up of a Small Scale Industries Centre in Sri Lanka.

Grants in Aid to ICWA

5454. PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have sanctioned|propose to sanction any grants-in-

aid on recurring basis or ad-hoc basis to Indian Council of World Affairs; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R. L. BHATIA): (a) and (b) Government funding to the Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) was discontinued in 1985. In pursuance of the recommendations of the Standing Committee of Parliament, the Government has decided that a high-powered committee should be constituted to look into the problems being faced by ICWA and suggest solutions. Any supervisory/advisory committee can only be constituted in pursuance of a request made by this organisation. The governing body of the Council is presently being persuaded to pass a resolution requesting the Government to set up such a high-powered committee. If and when this committee is established, the Government may provide funding on ad hoc/recurring basis. The quantum of such funding will have to be decided only at that time.

Violation of Human Rights in Pakistan Occupied Kashmir

5455. SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SAMBHAJIRAO SHINDE:
SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any account of the reported uprising of the people and violation of their human rights in Pakistan Occupied Kashmir, during the three years; and

(b) if so, what steps have been taken to inform the international community about the atrocities and violation of human rights perpetuated on the people of Pakistan Occupied Kashmir?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R. L. BHATIA): (a) and (b) Government are aware that people living in areas of Jammu & Kashmir, illegally occupied by Pakistan through aggression, are denied their democratic rights. According to avaiable information, recurring violence, sectarian strife and economic deprivation and backwardness seriously affect the rights and privileges of the people of these areas.

Government have and will contiue to apprise the international community of the true facts of the deplorable conditions prevailing in the Pakistan - Occupied Kashmir and the so-called 'Northern Areas'.

Pakistan's Declartaion about its Nuclear Programme

5456. SHRI V. NARAYANASWAMY:
SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA:
SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SAMBHAJIRAO SHINDE:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that Pakistan had declared that it was neither fair nor feasible for Islamabad to accept obligations and restraints regarding its nuclear programme;

(b) whether it is a fact that Pakistan was not being asked to sign the Nuclear Non-proliferatio Treaty (NPT) unilaterally and was also not being pressed to roll back its nuclear programmes; and

(c) if so, the reaction of Government and steps proposed to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R. L. BHATIA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Government has seen media reports quoting Pakistani leaders that Pakistan will not accept any unilateral restraints on its nuclear programme.